

Construction Continues On Causeway

The day was warm, the construction workers were awaiting the arrival of the concrete trucks to pour the next segment of the tidal wall, and in general, the entire site at Atlantic Causeway basked in the sun.

The construction site to rebuild the Causeway seawall, tidal wall and roadway didn't always enjoy the luxury of good weather. But on this day one could clearly visualize the end of the project. Bonazzoli Contractors' estimated completion date is June 15.

The 600-foot walls will replace the old narrower ones which were devastated in the blizzard of '78 and will contain a road in the middle along the shoreline at Pleasant Beach. This stretch of road has been closed since December when digging for construction began on the sea side and when wave action undermined the path left for cars, leaving it too dangerous to pass.

Dante Salamone, resident state engineer overseeing the \$450,000 federally funded project, explained the difference between the old and the actions of the walls. A causeway, he noted, is a road contained by two walls, raised over wet land.

The first 30-foot section was poured Dec. 14 within a mold that formed the 15-foot curve radius seawall. This outward curve in the seawall, Salamone said, will aid in dissipating wave action.

The strength of the 11-foot wall, which tapers from a five-foot width at the base to three feet at the top, is insured by the use of Boston Sand and Gravel's accelerated strength concrete. While held in place for 24 hours within the insulated mold atop the steel reinforced base and protected from temperature extremes by a plastic covering, the concrete bakes itself to solidity within a day, Salamone said.

Illustrating just how strong the wall becomes almost immediately after it is poured, Richard Bonazzoli, head engineer and president of the company, showed pictures of the site during the February wind-driven storm. Gigantic waves crashed over the first of the freshly cast seawall — without damaging an inch of

it, Salamone assured. Salamone is also responsible for procuring concrete test cylinders of each segment of wall which are examined for their "crushability" or breaking point.

However, Bonazzoli said, the winter storms cost his team approximately three weeks of work time. On several occasions, when the next 30-foot segment was being readied for its pouring of concrete the sea would wash in a load of stone and obliterate the prepared footings. This would necessitate at least a day of cleanup before continuing with construction of the wall.

Bitter cold also incapacitated the workers, Bonazzoli

said. Some of the men attested that there were days so bad they had to stop work before quitting time. Photos of those days depicted a barren stretch of land and a construction team so bundled up in arctic gear that only their eyes were visible.

Other hardships came in the form of ledge rock which had to be blasted, at the beginning and end of the seawall. Also, before work got underway, temporary easements had to be secured from abutting neighbors whose land would become strewn with debris during construction. Salamone said that restoration of neighboring property will be included as part of the project.

Construction of the tidal

wall, which is being built adjacent to an area of marshland, is not so difficult a task, Salamone said. This wall lacks the curve of the seawall, and will be five feet shorter than the other although the same height when completed. Drains are built into the bottom portion of the tidal wall, to allow water which may splash over onto the road to drain off on the marsh side. A 30-foot segment will be poured each day until the wall's completion sighted for April 6, weather permitting, Salamone added.

A 27-foot wide road will be built up between the walls to a depth of 10 feet, leaving a foot of wall exposed on either side of the road. A steel beam guide rail will be bolted on top of both walls for driving protection, the engineers said.

Salamone praised Bonazzoli for his expertise in handling the massive job, as well as his foresight for keeping a full

motorpool of equipment on site at all times. Bouquets were given, also, to Selectman Arthur Clark by both Salamone and Bonazzoli, for his daily concern and work as coordinator in obtaining funds and permits for the project.



Seawall construction

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